

WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION
HELD IN NEW DELHI
FEBRUARY 6-7, 1995**



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**REPORT
OF
NATIONAL CONSULTATION
ON
WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

**FEBRUARY 6-7, 1995
NEW DELHI**



**VANI-Voluntary Action Network India
H-17/1, Malviya Nagar
NEW DELHI 110 017**

Acknowledgements

We at VANI wish to extend our most sincere gratitudes to those who worked hard to make the National Consultation on "World Summit for Social Development" held on February 6-7, 1995 at New Delhi, a success.

We also wish to express our deep appreciation to Shri Jagadananda, CYSD, Bhubaneswar and Dr. Rajesh Tandon, PRIA, New Delhi, without whose support it would have been difficult to organise the Consultation. Our special thanks go to all participants and especially to Shri Alok Mukhopadhyay, VHA, for his support, Shri K. R. Venugopal, Secretary, Prime Minister Office for his valuable contribution, Ms Atreyee Cordeiro, National Foundation of India and Dr. Yash Chauhan, Free Lance Journalist for their active participation and help in the preparation of this report.

The text of this report has been prepared by Anil K Singh and Seema Gaikwad, under the guidance of Dr. Rajesh Tandon.

New Delhi

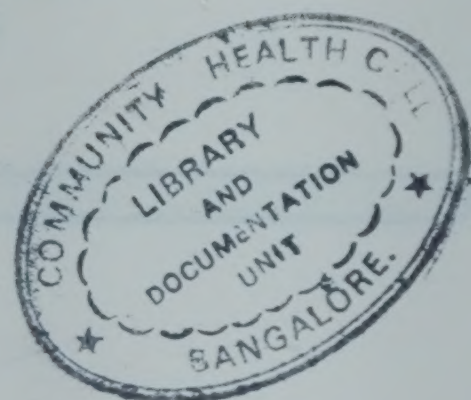
February 26, 1995

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REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION
ON
WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Organised by VANI at New Delhi
February 6-7, 1995

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NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1

THE CONTEXT

During the past eight months, several regional and sectorial consultations on the themes of the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development have been held in the country. Several state-level consultations have proposed the need for a National Consultation which could examine the emerging Plan of Action of the World Summit. Besides, there is a need for a more concerted and coordinated effort to ensure that Government of India pursues a set of National Policies arrived at poverty eradication, employment generation and social integration, the three themes of the Social Summit.

Even though three Preparatory Committee Meeting are being concluded and the summit itself is slated for March 6-12, 1995 at Copenhagen, VANI felt that the issues facing the Summit require a long-term perspective and planning. It is important that we set-up a mechanism for ongoing monitoring and dialogue on the agreements made at the summit to ensure their follow-up implementation in the Country. It is with this background that VANI organised a National Consultation of Voluntary Agencies at Delhi during February 6-7, 1995 with the following objectives :

- a) To share information and emerging analysis on the themes of the World Summit on Social Development;

- b) To critically analyse the national document and proposed Plan of Action for the Summit;
- c) To develop long-term plans for ongoing monitoring and follow-up beyond the Summit.

Voluntary Organisations who had taken initiative in organising regional/state level workshops, organisations who are members of VANI and those organisations who have been accredited for the main Summit participated in this two-day consultation.

As a part of the process VANI in collaboration with state regional networks organised following regional/state level consultations.

- a) Andhra Pradesh NGOs consultation with Janmitra December 21-22, 1994 at Tirupathi.
- b) Bhopal consultation, with Ekta Parishad December 29, 1994 at Bhopal.
- c) Patna consultation, with VAN-Bihar January 27-28, 1995 at Patna.
- d) Lucknow consultation, with UPVAN January 30, 1995 at Lucknow.

Apart from these following voluntary organisations also organised regional/sectorial consultations: Indian Social Institute and Janmitra, Bangalore; UNDP, New Delhi; Action Aid, New Delhi, SAHAYI, Kerala; Dalit Jagriti Samithi, Tumkur, Bangalore. For details of the regional consultations see enclosure -IV

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KEY ISSUES

During the first plenary session speakers placed their views on issues related to Social Development. It was highlighted that agendas of the Social Summit are inter-related. It was no longer possible to talk about social integration without inserting the question of poverty and exclusion in the Indian and South Asian context. Mere focus on employment generation does not address the question of poverty either. Therefore, the agenda of the Summit is essentially a interrelated and logistic agenda, at the base of which is economic and social exclusion of communities, groups, sections of population from the mainstream of economic, social and political process. The social disintegration, turmoil, conflict and reassertion of narrow parochial, at times communal, identities in the countries of South Asia today is largely because such groups feel excluded from the active, social and political participation. These conflicts may get reflected around castes, classes, gender, religion, region, and linguistic or nationalistic identity.

Another speaker highlighted that social development as addressed in the papers circulated by United Nation on World Summit for Social Development is a far cry from what Gandhi's concept of Socialism was. Development as defined in these papers was just another term with the addition of Social Integration. It was a way of bringing more societal responsibilities under the sway of state institution. Indian Voluntary Sector cannot go along with this formulation. It has its own distinct social location and mission derived from its cultural civilizational grounding and historical experience. The opportunity at the Social Summit, if it is to be used at all, should be taken to present this articulation of our own self-concept and commitment based on the power of Samaj (Society), Samudhaya (Community) and our lack of alianation from it (this is so natural that we don't recognised its worth). Efforts are to be made

to have global corporate control to be extended and legitimated through us, by using us as fronts. We have to undo the conditioning of Macaulay, Marx and McNamara and delve deep into our being in close relationship with communities of the people, especially, the poor, the lowly and the lost.

Concept and Definition of Social Development :

With this background, the participants worked in three small groups to define their own vantage points and look at the concept and definition of social development from the context of social roots. When the groups reported back to the plenary, it was quite clear that all the groups had been reflecting along the same lines and there was definite consensus and similarities in the group reports.

Social development was defined from the perspective of the people who comprised of the members of a civil society where social development is seen as a phenomena which is based on the fundamental concept of equal access to resources, and a right to basic needs such as health, education, shelter, livelihood, food security, welfare, participation in decision making, and freedom from discrimination of all forms.

The definition of poverty as in the UN Drafts Declaration failed to look at poverty as a structural issue. Issues related to poverty have to be dealt with in a holistic strategy based on structural understanding.

Analysis of Social Development :

In an effort to move towards the formulation of a new paradigm, analysis of social development and poverty, based on their experiences, and also to develop a plan of action which could address this new definition the participants were broken up into small groups. The thrust of this exercise was to define social development in a social context, and locate it in the social domain. The participants debated that the term development was used in its present meaning only after the IInd World War and in the Indian context it was used even later on. It was stated that in the past India has used the term 'nirman' ('construction') and 'Purarninirman' ('reconstruction') which has a broader meaning than the term development. While this might seem to be a logical exercise, yet, as is evident from the WSSD documents, the context of social development has moved into economic and political domains, and thus serves the vested interests of those forces and not of the people who are at

the center of development programmes. In our historical context, it was pointed out, social development has become a constructed concept of dominant globalisation, and the sources of power were not placed externally. In this context, it was felt that it is crucial that a new development paradigm is created to formulate our own development agenda instead of working within the framework of an external agenda which is handed out to us. The social agenda of the country should emerge not from Copenhagen but from those social forces within the country which are inherently people-centred.

Goal of Social Development :

The goal of social development was seen as the elimination of hunger and equitable distribution of resources. The fundamental premise was based on equity, justice and democracy. The structural cause of poverty was seen as mismanagement of natural and human resources, and lack of people's access to these resources.

The major tool for development was seen as access and control over resources, such as land, water and forest etc. The role of the state, in its present form, was seen as a major deterrent in social development objectives and it was clear that development could only occur in a redefined statutory framework which is based on decentralisation of power and places people at the centre of decision-making processes, by strengthening community organisations and local institutions. Special emphasis was also placed on certain categories of people who were deprived or marginalised, whether on the basis of class, gender, religion or caste. The major factor which was also highlighted in this context was that of accountability and transparency of all institutions involved in the social development process, be they at the local, regional, national or international level.

The critical issues that emerged during the consultation are :

(a) National Resource Allocations: The question of national resource allocations, especially in the context of the proposed 20/20 plan, which says that if national governments allocate 20 per cent of their resources for social development programmes, then 20 per cent of international aid will also be allocated towards this component. This was objected to by the G-77 countries. They are of the opinion that there should not be any condition of International Aid. In fact the nations

should be free to allocate as much as they think necessary for social development but International Aid should be at least 20% of the total plan allocations.

(b) Goal of reducing poverty as against eradicating poverty : The other issue was the debate regarding the goal of reducing poverty as against eradicating poverty. The NGO stand was that the goal should be on eradicating poverty completely, since the reduction of poverty could only be a short-term goal and not a long-term goal. A similar stand was taken by India during the IInd PrepCom meet. The Indian voluntary agencies were also of the opinion that the schemes for poverty eradication in India are mostly welfare schemes which prove that through these schemes poverty cannot be eradicated. Participant of the consultation suggested that the GOI should formulate developmental schemes in close cooperation with actors of civil society to achieve the goal of poverty eradication.

(c) Overseas Development Aid : The question of Overseas Development Aid was also unresolved, since none of the countries had yet reached 0.7 per cent of their GNP towards ODA as per the UN resolution taken in 1970. It was reiterated that all countries giving ODA must comply with their commitment by the year 2005. Participants were of the opinion that since this commitment had been agreed upon 25 years ago, keeping in view the rapid changes taking place, the UN should enforce this decision on developed countries with immediate effect.

(d) Structural Adjustment Programmes : The negative impact of structural adjustment programmes was also debated keenly, and the general consensus was that all SAP activities need to be re-examined. It was also debated that SAP is anti-poor and further marginalises the already marginalized sections of the society. Participants strongly advocated for delinking of animal, plants, and life saving drugs from Patent Act. However, no definite action plan towards this end could emerge.

(e) The Market Forces : In the Draft Declaration as well as Plan of Action, the dominance of the market forces still remains a major issue of contention. Participants were of the opinion that in a market economy product and consumer are too important actors and play an important role, but in the Indian context, what remains a challenge is how the the poor and disadvantaged section of the society who are neither producers nor consumers are drawn into the mainstream of market economy. Unless the purchasing power of the people increases it is not only difficult but impossible to bring them into the mainstream.

(f) Structural causes of poverty : It was also reiterated that time bound goals need to be set for poverty eradication, while at the same time the structural causes of poverty need to be addressed. Some of the structural causes of poverty highlighted were:

(i) Lack of Political will : India does have progressive legislation but due to lack of political will it is not implemented/pursued seriously. Experience and data shows that even the welfare schemes are not able to reach the target groups.

(ii) Planning from top to bottom : Although India claims to follow the pattern of decentralization, planning is done from the top and trickles downwards. The people/target groups are not part of the decision making process. It is a widely accepted fact that unless we follow a people-centered development, development cannot be achieved.

(iii) Corruption and Red tapism: Corruption and red tapism at all levels is a crude reality in India. For achieving even the smallest work one is to pay bribe or work will not be done. The lack of accountability of the government officials has resulted in this. Rules, regulations and procedures are so cumbersome that even a highly educated person faces a lot of problems. Even the VOs working for the common people face these problems while mobilizing people for their rights and implementing Govt. schemes.

(iv) Transparency and accountability : Although we in India claim that people have a 'right to information' but most of the information/data related/needed to achieve the goals of planning and implementation of the programmes are kept in secrecy and information is inaccessible. Due to lack of information it is difficult to monitor and make people accountable. In fact, India has a system where one is not accountable either vertically or horizontally.

(g) Democratize all International Financial Institutions : With regards to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), it was pointed out that a social audit mechanism needs to be created in order to gauge the impact of these financial institutions.

Participants were of the opinion that these international financial institutions should be under the UN system in order to democratize them to make them accountable to the global community and to remove their profit orientation. The supremacy of the market should give way to the sovereignty of the people.

(h) Equity for Women : One of the constant themes was that women's concerns should underpin all the proposed plans of action. In this context, there is still some debate on whether the issue should be equal opportunities for the women, or the equity for women. Most of the women groups felt that 'equal opportunity' will not help in empowering women and therefore, they demanded that there should equal opportunity for women alongwith equity for women.

(i) Monitoring of Social Development: It was felt that due to globalisation and other factors, the implementation and monitoring of social development should be the responsibility of the whole world community. In this very spirit it was desired that all humanity is a single community but the current global scenario does not permitt it. A small part of humanity is advanced, prosperous and powerful whereas a greater part of it is underdeveloped, debt-ridden and powerless.

(j) Increase in disparity : Many participants in the consultations on World Summit were of the view that though the documents of the World Summit emphasises the growth as a devise of bridging the widening divide between the growth as a devise of bridging the widening divide between the rich and the poor, this very growth syndrome is precisely the problem for increasing inequalities, chronic poverty and other social problems.

(k) Growth centered versus people centered development : It was also felt that the UN document is based on the false belief that once the economic growth is achieved, the social development will follow automatically. Hence many participants in regional consultations felt that the growth-centered development is becoming a development of a few influential minority and leaving majority in poverty. In this run the lower strata of the nations and society were marginalised. Many felt that due to globalisation and fast changing communication systems and technology, the have nots are being systematically cut off from the developmental process.

The issue of decentralization and strengthening existing groups of people who had already organised themselves to work towards social development also emerged. It was felt that focus must be on decentralization of decision making processes and resource control and facilitating a people centered development paradigm through participation by the people themselves in decisions which affected their lives.

(I) Social responsibility of Industrial Sector : The issue of the social responsibility of the industrial sector was also raised and it was felt that institutions involved in the sector must undergo a change in attitude to take into account the needs of the workers, including health, education etc. the sector must understand its specific role in the economic as well as the social development of the country.

As is very clear from the consolidation of these recommendations, there is a lot of convergence regarding the issues which came up, and it is clear that groups involved in social action throughout the country had very similar recommendations to make about the Plan of Action, as also about the areas which have been left out of the official documents. It is also clear that the impact of global implications on local issues was being felt more and more at the grassroots level, and it was becoming crucial for different actors in the sector to work together to countervail these forces, on a common platform, by redefining the basic could have more meaning and impact in today's world.

3

CRITIQUE OF DRAFT DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The three preparatory committee (prepcom) meetings were held during April 1993, August-September 1994, and January 1995, respectively.

During the first session a focused analysis of the core issue emerged. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a draft negotiating text on the basis of the contents of the objectives and three core issues.

During the second session the draft texts of the declaration and the programme of action were discussed. The Secretariat's initial drafts met with much criticism for both its structure and content.

The Bureau was requested to convene intersessional informal consultations in October to facilitate the preparation of a new draft text to serve as the basis for negotiations at the third and final PrepCom.

The intersessional informal consultations were held from 24-28 October 1994, where an integrated negotiating text was finalised.

The third PrepCom was a final attempt to refine both draft texts and incorporate major agreed recommendations of heads of delegations of the participating countries.

The participants discussed both the Draft texts. Some of the points that emerged were:

- a) The draft documents were criticised for having taken a placatory, palliative .

and even propagandist line, investing the market mechanism with some ideological mystique back in to democracy. The draft documents hardly address the core issues behind the world-wide crisis of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration.

- b) The draft texts have used the dominant paradigm of “development” which is based on reductionist sciences, mega technologies, centralized systems, but which should have been based on the paradigm where human effort does not go against the grain of nature and where development is people centered.
- c) The participants criticized the UN draft document for not responding to the urgency of the escalating crisis in the physical and social environments.
- d) It was also felt that the UN draft document suggests opening up of market opportunities for small enterprises which provide most of the employment, including the vast unorganised sector of the economy, in a country like India. This possibility is unreal as it doesn't take into account the disadvantage while competing in an increasing integrated marketisation process swayed by mega monopolies and market manipulators.
- e) The participants also highlighted the issue that the UN draft document does not acknowledge the organic linkages between social cohesion on the one hand and poverty reduction and employment on the other.
- f) It was debated that under the section ‘Actions’ which states that the Governments and the international community should commit themselves to the eradication of poverty. The participants felt that every government needs to now commit itself to recognising the right to livelihood, and to commit its efforts and resources to satisfy the basic needs of its people as basic rights.
- g) The participants also felt that in the Draft Declaration and Programme of Action only national efforts have been emphasized.
- h) The participants also highlighted that the documents lacked gender perspective. The papers, it was stated, does not specially address the questions of women and their role in “social development”. It does not attempt to question why three quarters of the world's most deprived are women who are considered socially inferior and suffer gender based discrimination and violence.

- i) It was also deliberated upon by the participants that while the problems of 'Africa' were real and required concerted attention, poverty in Asia which is the home of an overwhelmingly large percentage of poverty-stricken people was not receiving adequate attention.
- j) The participants felt that the UN system and the Bretton Woods institutions need restructuring to make them really democratic organisations of mankind rather than of governments.
- k) It was also discussed that the countries should insist that free trade policies which area sought to be implemented via WTO must not set limits to self-eliant and autonomous development efforts of developing countries.
- l) The participants felt that the question of disarmament has not been dealt with in the Drafts. They felt that a demand should be made to ban arms trade.
- m) The participants felt that "land reforms" should be emphasised and that nations should undertake land reform to provide land to the landless poor and ensuring that the landed poor are not dispossessed.
- n) The participants also felt that the drafts should have also addressed the nations to enact legislation and to take steps to ensure the safety, dignity, fair working conditions of seasonal migrant workers, both within and between countries; identify and implement special measures to smoothen such migration processes where the main impetus may be economic and not political or social.

4

CRITIQUE OF INDIA NATIONAL REPORT

The Indian National Report was published by the Ministry of External Affairs and submitted to the UN by the Government of India (GOI). It throws light on India's approach to social development and highlights programmes which are implemented by the GOI to promote social development.

In the Indian context certain strategies have been adopted to enhance social development. Some of these are the commitment to democratic governance where people have the right to vote, where transparency of governance and the right to information are the fundamental rights of all people, where elections to the India Parliament and the state legislatures are held under the supervision of the Election Commission of India, where the state finance commissions apportion resources to the mechanism of local self-governance (panchayat and municipality), where the legislature frames policies for specific sections of society such as the National Child Policy, National Commission for Human Rights, like the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, where the state in India assumes rightly a role of laying down policies, building institutions and committing large resources for furthering social development. The Government attaches high importance to the part that the Voluntary Organisations can play in the mobilisation and organisation of the people in the context of social development and employment.

In all the consultations organised and attended by VANI, the India National Report has been widely criticized. The India National Report is stated to be a disembodied statement, lacking vision. It is more of a 'statement of intention' rather than India's position on social development. It was stated to be a re-write of the Eight Five Year Plan.

Defination of Poverty:

The participants felt the India Country Report does not reflect the reality of poverty. The defination as given in Report fails to look at poverty as a structural issue. They felt that in the present secnario food security, control over productive resources, share in the development/growth process, equitable distribution and human dignity are the important issues related to the poverty which has to be dealt with a holistic strategy based on structural understanding.

Social Development:

The participants also stated that the India document is based on the belief that once the economic growth is achieved, the social development will follow automatically - but the reality is that economic growth and the growth in wealth is achieved by only rich nations enabling them to become richer and the poor nations poorer. India National Report should look into this aspect as well.

Social Development Programmes:

The participants felt that the social development programmes are not based on complete analysis of the Indian situation. They felt that the present day development schemes as implemented by the GOI (Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, IRDP, TRYSEM etc.) were more on the line of welfare schemes as they were not unable to achieve their targets.

Regional Variance:

The participants were of the view that the India National Report does not take into account the significant regional variance while discussing social development. The India Report should have taken into account this regional variance and disparities, while putting the document together. Centralized planning could not enable us in bridging the gap of this regional variance closer.

Rights of Human Beings:

The participants felt that the document states that 'The Rights of the Nations to be respected and redressed in a historic perspective'. This is true, but Rights of Human Beings must also get equal recognition with rights of nations for nations are made of people.

Empowerment of People:

The document quotes 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment as the country's prime moves for ensuring political empowerment of the people. The Panchayat Raj Act 1992 has limited peoples empowerment programme.

Role of State as Safeguarding Democracy:

The participants also stated that the document only highlights the role of state as one of safeguarding democracy and strengthening local self-governance. The participants stated that the state should not limit itself to this only.

Failure of National Commissions:

They also felt that the document states that National Commissions have been set up for SC's, ST, Minorities and Women to safeguard the rights quaranteed under the constitution. These commissions by and large play an advisory role rather than a regulatory role. It is a reality that several reports of the above said National Commissions are known to be pending and decisions awaited from the Parliament.

Agrarian Reforms:

The participants also felt that in the section that talks of Agrarian Reforms and highlights issues like Land Reforms, Public Distribution System and Minimum Support Prices, and states that these are functioning in a proper manner, in reality these have not been implemented. Land Reforms should be implemented which is the basic step for the eradication of rural poverty.

Safety Nets:

The participants also highlighted that the document speaks about safety nets for the disadvantaged and vulnerable, keeping gender concerns at the centre. But the strategy of market oriented economy, the Structural Adjustment Programme etc. are taking away the safety nets provided hitherto.

Eradication of Child Labour:

The participants felt that the document states that about 2 million children are estimated to be employed in hazardous industries. But statistics show that it is not 2 million but more than this number that works in hazardous conditions. The govern-

ment claims that the ICDS programme which will cover these areas to get a head start in the race against exploitation will be able to achieve thier targets of having phased out the 2 million children from hazardous labour by the year 2000. This target may not be achieved because the number as stated earlier is much more than the document claims.

These were some of the issues that were raised by the participants while criticising the India National Report.

5

FOLLOW-UP AND FUTURE STRATEGIES

After this, the participants discussed follow-up plans, both before the WSSD at Copenhagen as well as after Copenhagen, again in three groups. The main point which was reiterated by all the groups was the importance of having a mechanism which will monitor in three groups. The main point which was reiterated by all the groups was the importance of having a mechanism which will monitor the commitments which are ratified at Copenhagen by the heads of state, at all levels. This was felt to be crucial, particularly in view of the fact that most UN conferences resulted in a variety of promises and commitments which were never fulfilled by the governments concerned. It was therefore felt that the major follow-up action should be to institute a mechanism which would play a watchdog role, and monitor the government's commitments in the coming years. While many of the participants felt that this mechanism could be in the form of a National Commission on Social Development. Some felt that such a Commission should not be along the lines of existing Commissions which were unable to play the role envisaged for them due to certain constraints. It was felt that if a Commission had to be constituted, it should remain as an autonomous body, with equal participation by all sectors of civil society. More concretely, it was recommended that the following activities be set into motion, both before the Summit as well as after.

(a) Before the Summit

All the recommendations emerging out of the regional consultations should be synthesized and sent to Copenhagen to be disseminated and shared with other participants there. This could be done through those who were present at this national consultation, and who were going to attend the WSSD.

A synthesis of the recommendations should also be placed before the government, with particular reference to those recommendations which were directed to the

state, including the recommendations emerging out of the national consultation such as the formation of a National Commission for Social Development.

(b) After the Summit.

A follow-up committee was formed comprising of a network of all those regional organisations which had organised consultations on the WSSD. It was formed in order to disseminate the outcomes of the Summit back to a large section of groups at the regional and local levels, as well as to those areas which had not been part of the process as yet. The members of this committee are:

1. S Lazar, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore, Karnataka
2. Jagdananda, Centre for Youth and Development, Bhubaneshwar, Orissa
3. G. Placid, Sahayai, Trivandrum, Kerala
4. K. S. Gopal, CEC, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
5. K. Loganathan, ISED, Madras, Tamil Nadu
6. Joseph Gathia, CCCL, New Delhi
7. M. Kamal, Janmitra, Bangalore
8. Ashok Singh, UPVAN, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
9. Pranab Choudhary, VAN-Bihar, Patna, Bihar
10. Dr. V.P.Chaturvedi, Madhya Pradesh Federation of Voluntary Agencies, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
11. Sharad Joshi, DCNC Trust, Jaipur, Rajasthan
12. Anil K Singh, VANI, New Delhi

Simultaneously, this nodal group should set in motion a process of periodically monitoring the commitments made in Copenhagen and disseminate the results of this to the constituents. However, it was felt that this should not be constituted within one body or institution but should be the collective responsibility of all members of the group, and initiatives could be taken up by any member of the group.

National Consultation on World Summit for Social Development

Venue - Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi

February 6-7, 1995

DESIGN OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION

February 6, 1995

- | | | |
|---------------|----|---|
| 9.00 - 10.00 | - | Registration and Introduction |
| 10.00 - 11.30 | | First Plenary : |
| | - | Welcome - Mr. Anil K. Singh |
| | - | Purpose of this Consultation and Context of Social Summit - Dr. Rajesh Tandon |
| | - | The Issues Facing Draft Plan of Action of the Social Summit - Mr. Jagdananda |
| | - | Overview and Issues in India Country Report - Dr. Amitabh Mukherjee |
| 11.30 - 11.45 | - | Tea Break |
| 11.45 - 1.00 | | Second Plenary : |
| | - | Reporting of State and Zonal Level Consultations: |
| | 1. | Mr. S Lazar - South India Consultation |
| | 2. | Mr. M Kamal - Andhra Pradesh Consultation |
| | 3. | Mr. G. Placid - Kerala Consultation |
| | 4. | Mr. Sharad Joshi - Rajasthan Consultation |
| | 5. | Mr. Joseph Gathia - New Delhi Consultation |

6. Mr. Awadesh Gautam - Uttar Pradesh Consultation
7. Mr. Sailendra Shrivastava - Bihar Consultation
8. Dr. V.P.Chaturvedi- Madhya Pradesh Consultation
- General Discussion
- Lunch Break
- Small Group Discussion
 - Poverty Alleviation
 - Employment Generation
 - Social Integration

1.00 - 1.30

1.30 - 2.30

2.30 - 5.30

February 7, 1995

9.30 -11.30

- Third Plenary :**
- 1. Presentation of Group Reports
 - 2. Strategies beyond Summit
 - Tea Break
 - Small Group Discussion on Proposed Strategies beyond Summit
 - Lunch

11.00 - 11.30

11.30- 1.30

1.30 - 2.30

2.30 - 5.00

- Fourth Plenary :**
- Government position on WSSD - Mr. K.R. Venugopal
 - Group Reports on strategies beyond summit.
 - General Discussion
 - Vote of Thanks - Dr. Rajesh Tandon
 - Closing

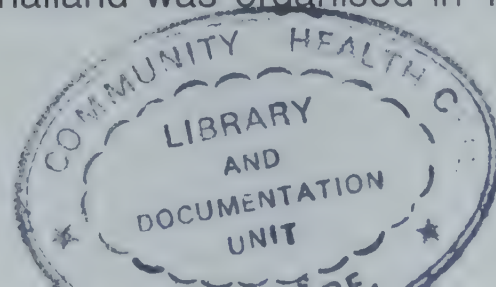
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Late in 1992 the UN General Assembly agreed to call a World Summit on Social Development for Heads of State. The summit was called after a series of consultations were carried out on the need for such a meeting, by the Secretary General's Special Representative, Ambassodar Juan Somavia of Chile. Meetings with government agencies of the UN and Non-Governmental Organisations were held over a year-long period before the final report was submitted by the Ambassador to the UN Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Somavi'a's report outlines how the summit would enable people at the highest level to share world-wide commitment to development and international cooperation. He called for each country to establish rational structures as soon as possible to serve as focal points for preparations for the Summit, to enable a coordinated effort to influence the agenda and the outcomes of the proposed WSSD.

This is not the first time that the UN has made an effort to bring together heads of state and governments onto a common platform. One should briefly trace the ongoing cycle of UN conferences organised in the past 15 years and the role of voluntary organisations, before analysing the need for World Summit for Social Development.

1. The World Health Assembly of 1978 held at Alma Ata in the then Soviet Union was primarily organised by the World Health Organisation and Ministers of Health and other government decision makers participated. The role of voluntary agencies was negligible as the preparatory process did not directly involve the NGOs and voluntary organisations.
2. The World Conference on Agrarian Reforms and Rural Development organised in 1979 by FAO in Rome. The NGOs and voluntary organisations during this conference organised a parallel conference wherein the real issues of inadequate and unjust agrarian reforms and rural development policies were brought to the attention of the public at large.
3. The World Women's Conference in 1985 in Nairobi saw the active involvement of women's groups and the UN also setup an inter-sectoral committee comprising of representatives of women's organisations.
4. The World Conference on Education for All in Thailand was organised in 1990.



There was only a symbolic presence of NGOs and the NGO participants were treated as observers and hardly given any space in the major deliberations.

5. The World Summit on Children in September 1991 did not involve, even in the preparatory process, any participatory debate with voluntary organisations and NGOs.
6. The Earth Summit in 1992 in Rio witnessed how the NGOs used their energies in preparing for and conducting the events during the Global forum, but remained passive participants and listeners to the speeches of the governmental officials and political ministers.
7. The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 declared both civil and political rights as Human Rights.
8. The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and the International Conference on Population and Development were some of the conferences which were held in 1994.

The cycle will culminate in 1995 with the World Summit on Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, capped by the commemoration of the UN Fiftieth Anniversary on October 24, 1995.

It will be for the first time in the history of the UN or the league of nations in which heads of state and government will meet in order to deal with social development as a priority issue of the international agenda. The summit primarily focuses on the three interrelated problems of poverty, unemployment and social integration. These something interrelated problems share besides universal concern : the possibility that they can be solved over time through collective international efforts. Increased international cooperation for economic and social development could significantly contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security.

Summit Objectives:

The General Assembly Resolution 47/92 of December 16, 1992 identifies eleven major summit objectives :

- * Place the needs of people at the centre of development;
- * Secure international governmental and NGO policies that promote social develop-

ment and enable the active involvement of all citizens;

- * Place special priority on the social development needs of the least developed countries;
- * Attain an appropriate balance between economic efficiency and social justice in growth-oriented, equitable and sustainable development environments, in accordance with nationally defined priorities;
- * Address creatively the interaction between the social function of the state, market responses to social demands and the imperatives of sustainable development;
- * Identify common problems of socially marginalized and disadvantaged groups and promote their social integration and attainment of equal opportunities;
- * Promote legal protection, effective social welfare and education and training for all;
- * Ensure effective delivery of social services to the disadvantaged;
- * Mobilize resources for social development at the local, national, regional and international levels;
- * Recommend effective actions and policies for the UN system in the sphere of social development and particularly for the Commission for Social Development.

Involvement of Voluntary Organisations and NGOs:

The NGOs have been involved right from the first preparatory committee meeting. The International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) has joined forces with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and has invited NGOs to a series of meetings to discuss participation in the summit.

NGO regional consultations related to national and regional issues have taken place and these regional consultations culminated in a global preparatory meeting for the summit which was held in July 1994, in Finland.

Further to this, to make the NGOs actively involved in the preparations of the World Summit the International Council for Adult Education and the South American Peace Commission set up an International Seminar of NGOs for the World Summit on Social Development. This followed discussions on the forming of a Non-Governmental Committee in support of the Summit for Social Development which was held in Santiago in Chile in 1994.

Another NGO conference on the World Summit on Social Development was held in June 1994, in Manila, Philippines, wherein Asia-Pacific NGOs participated and committed themselves not only to push civil society into the mainstream of development discourse but, more so, to enable it to become a major factor in shaping the future social order.

Preparatory Committee Meetings:

The three preparatory committee (prepcom) meetings were held in April 1993, August-September 1994, and January 1995, respectively. The Preparatory Committee (Prepcom) for the WSSD, representing all Member States and UN specialized agencies, during the first session in April 1993 elected a bureau composed of Chairman Juan Somavi'a and nine Vice-chairmen representing Australia, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland and Zimbabwe. Denmark, the host country, serves as an *ex-officio* member.

First Session:

During the first session a focused analysis of the core issue emerged. Government delegates, voluntary organisations and representatives from UN programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions participated in this. Delegates agreed that the Draft Declaration should contain three parts: a description of the world social situation; principles, goals, policy orientations and common challenges to be addressed by all actors at the local, national, regional and international levels; and an expression of commitment on issues relating to implementation and follow-up. The Declaration should be concise, focused, and reaffirm international agreements, instruments, declarations and decisions adopted by the UN system that are relevant to the Summit. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a draft negotiating text on the basis of the contents of the objectives and the three core issues.

Second Session:

During the second session the draft texts of the declaration and the programme of action were discussed. The documents were circulated earlier to enable widespread discussion on the draft texts. The Secretariats initial drafts met with much criticism for both its structure and content. Delegates' comments and drafting suggestions on the Programme of Action were then incorporated into a new compilation text, which was distributed at the end of the first week. Although the Secretariat, the Bureau and the delegates had hoped that the Prepcom would be able to produce a draft negotiating

text by the conclusion of this session, this was not to be the case. Instead the result was an unmanageable 200-250 page document containing the compilation text and all the amendments proposed by delegates during the second week. As a result, the Bureau was requested to convene intersessional informal consultations in October to facilitate the preparation of a new draft text to serve as the basis for negotiations at the third and final PrepCom. The second Prepcom session also reviewed the UN system activities on social development, reviewed the data sources and publications on social development issued by the UN, reports on meetings of experts and symposia organised as part of the summit preparations, national reports and NGO reports from UN programmes and agencies were also discussed.

Intersessional Informal Consultation:

The PrepCom met in New York for a week of intersessional informal consultations from October 24-28, 1994. The purpose of this session was to give delegates the opportunity to identify areas of convergence and divergence in both the Draft Programme of Action and the Draft Declaration. The specific goal was to provide enough guidance both to the Secretariat and PrepCom Chair, Amb. Juan Somavi'a, to produce integrated negotiating text.

The structure of the Draft Programme of Action underwent a considerable metamorphosis as a result of a proposal by the G-77 (India Member of G-77) on the first day. Delegates welcomed the G-77s proposed reorganization and, thus, easily agreed to request the Secretariat to reorganize the Programme of Action in line with the G-77s proposal.

Third Session:

The third Prepcom was a final attempt to refine both the draft texts and incorporate the major agreed recommendations of heads of delegations of the participating countries. The Chair announced that more than 90 Heads of State or Government had confirmed their participation at the Summit. Over 2,000 NGOs have been accredited. The final Draft declaration will be discussed in the main Summit during March 6-12, 1995 at Copenhagen.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED AND UNRESOLVED AFTER THE THIRD AND LAST PREPCOM

Some of the issues that remain bracketed and must be negotiated in Copenhagen are as follows:

DRAFT DECLARATION

Introduction :

The introduction of the Draft Declaration outlines the need for and goals of the Social Summit. The only brackets are around the reference to living “in harmony with the environment”. (refer pt. 8.)

PART I A. Current Social Situation and Reasons for Convening the Summit

This section elaborates on the need for the Social Summit. A sub-paragraph regarding the social problems in countries with economies in transition is also bracketed [pt. 14 (c)]. Brackets remain around the call to address the negative impact from arms production and trade “whenever/wherever it occurs”. (pt. 18.)

B. Principles and Goals

This section outlines the necessary framework for action to promote “social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition.” Brackets remain around the reference to: promoting “more” equitable distribution [pt 22 (g)]; the right to self-determination of people under colonial or foreign occupation [pt. 22(k)]; and narrowing the gap between developed “and other countries in the world, developing countries, and countries with economies in transition” (pt. 24).

PART II. COMMITMENTS

This section contains nine commitments and related actions. The G-77/China suggested a tenth commitment but this was objected to on procedural grounds regarding the implications of its addition. The G-77/China text refers to education and culture, and incorporates a US reference to health care. The EU proposal focuses only on education. Delegates will address this issue in Copenhagen.

Commitment 1: Brackets remain around the qualification to provide a stable legal

framework “in accordance with our constitutions, national laws and procedures.” (a) A reference to the “provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources for sustainable development” is also bracketed (i).

Commitment 2: Calls for the eradication of poverty. There are no changes in this.

Commitment 3: Brackets remain around the right to work and workers rights. Language referring to quality jobs and respect for ILO conventions is also bracketed, (i).

Commitment 4: Brackets remain around a qualification that the implementation of international instruments relevant to human rights protection be “with full respect for the sovereignty of States”.(n).

Commitment 5: The reference stressing “the importance of responsible sexual and reproductive behavior and parenthood by men” (f) and the reference to access to health care services, including reproductive health care “programmes for which should provide the widest range of services, without any form of coercion.” were bracketed. It was proposed to place (i) before (c).

Commitment 6: Brackets in this commitment are confined to a single contentious paragraph, which calls for a (realistic), (effective), (equitable), development-oriented, durable) and sustainable) solution (on all types of debt), through cancellation (or reduction) of bilateral debt.....(c).

Increasing (the impact of official development assistance is also bracketed (e).

Commitment 7: There are no Brackets.

Commitment 8: Brackets remain around references to: mobilization of resources from all “available” funding sources (i); facilitation of finance, technology, and human skills transfer towards countries with economies in transition (j); cancellation of debt (n); a sustainable solution to the difficulties of servicing multilateral debt; and “striving” to increase finances for UN operational activities.

Commitment 9: A sub-paragraph calling on international actors to abstain from coercive measures, which hinder the economic and social development of States, remains bracketed.(c).

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The five chapters in the Programme of Action have sections on “basis for action and

objectives” and on the “actions” that national and international actors should take. The following highlights the issues that remain bracketed and will be discussed during the Copenhagen meeting.

Introduction

The Programme of Action outlines policies, actions, and measures to implement the principles and fulfill the commitments enunciated in the Declaration.

CHAPTER I. Enabling Environment for Social Development.

A. A Favourable National and International Economic Environment:

Brackets remain on one paragraph regarding reorientated agricultural policies and the adoption of appropriate forms of agricultural support in accordance with the relevant provision of the Final Act of the Uruguay round (f). Brackets also remain around the need for “more” equitably distributed benefits of global economic growth, whether the actions are “required/necessary” and whether or not they should be taken at the “international level” (pt. 10)

There are also brackets around the reference to continuing efforts to reduce “and/or eliminate on a case by case basis” the debt burden of developing countries, “particularly the poorest among them” (pt. 10(a)). Paragraphs on implementation of structural reform policies and creation of an enabling environment that attracts foreign and domestic direct investment are bracketed (pt. 11(a)). References to an “effective, comprehensive, equitable, development-orientated and durable solution to the external debt problem,” and to increases in ODA for social programmes, are bracketed (pt. 11(h)). The paragraph on measures to reduce inefficiencies and inequities arising from illegitimate/excessive accumulation of wealth by speculative windfall gains also remains unresolved (pt. 13(d)).

B. A Favourable National and International Political and Legal Environment:

Brackets remain around language on whether or not actions are “required” at the national level of support the objectives of social development (pt. 14). No decision was reached on whether social partners should be able to organize and function “freely and responsibly” or if their right to collectively bargain would be “in accordance with national laws and regulations” (pt. 14(e)). A parallel sub-paragraph regarding similar conditions for professional organizations and artisans’ organizations was left in brackets.

Language dealing with creating conditions for refugees and those displaced as a result of terrorist intervention for voluntary return to their places of origin was bracketed (pt. 14(j)). Several sub-paragraphs dealing with the right to development remain in brackets (pt. 15). Delegates did not resolve issues such as the removal of “economic” barriers to the exercise of the right to education (pt. 16(a)); discouraging the gratuitous depiction of explicit sex, violence and cruelty in the media (pt. 16(d)); and the removal of obstacles to the realization of the right to self-determination for peoples under colonial foreign or alien occupation (pt. 17(e)). The central role of the human being in sustainable development is also bracketed (pt. 17(f)).

CHAPTER II. Eradication of Poverty

This chapter refers to the one billion people in the world living under unacceptable conditions of poverty. A sentence on the origins of poverty in political, legal, economic, cultural and social structures remains bracketed (pt. 23).

A. The Formulation of Integrated Strategies:

A Sub-paragraph regarding the promotion of effective enjoyment by all of economic, social, cultural and civil rights remains in brackets, as well as language on all relevant sectors of the economy with respect to their impact on families. Consensus was not reached on developing indicators of poverty and vulnerability that would include “stability of families” [pt. 29(a)].

B. Improved Access to Productive Resources and Infrastructure :

The only bracketed language refers to protecting the “traditional” rights to land and other resources of pastoralists, fishery workers, and nomadic and indigenous people [pt. 33(b)].

C. Meeting the Basic Human Needs of all:

Bracketed language includes reference to the rights and responsibilities of parents to ensure that children have access to social services. Delegates also disagreed whether governments should implement commitments that have been made to meet the basic human needs of all “with the assistance, as appropriate, of the international community” [pt. 37)].

Reference to health care access for low-income communities remains bracketed. Delegates also bracketed reference to the promotion of cooperation among govern-

ment agencies to develop national strategies for improving maternal/reproductive health care [pt. 38(e)].

D. Enhanced Social Protection and Reduced Vulnerability:

Remaining brackets include references to; social protection systems to protect people who cannot work due to “language barriers” [pt. 39)]; providing children with the necessary social and psychological assistance for “family reunification;” and the provision of adequate social safety nets under structural adjustment programmes (pt. 39(i)).

CHAPTER III. The Expansion of Productive Employment and the Reduction of Unemployment:

The basis for action in this chapter refers to productive work not only as a means of economic livelihood, but as a defining element of human identity. The reference calling for unremunerated work to be reflected in satellite accounts of the GNP, as suggested by the Holy See, remains bracketed [pt. 47)].

A. The Centrality of Employment in Policy Formulation:

The alternatives to “maximize employment creation” and “stimulate both economic and employment-intensive growth” both remain bracketed (pt. 51)).

B. Education, Training and Labour Policies:

Delegates could not agree on whether helping workers to adapt and enhance their employment opportunities under changing economic conditions could best be done by “required actions” (pt. 54)).

C. Enhanced Quality of Work and Employment:

The issue of whether to “consider ratification,” “encourage ratification,” or “enforce” ILO conventions remains bracketed (pt. 55(b)).

D. Enhanced Employment Opportunities for Groups with Specific Needs:

The brackets remaining in this section refer to promoting or requiring comprehensive employment, educational and training programmes that consider the needs of indigenous people (t. 62).

E. A broader recognition and understanding of work and employment:

The bracketed language refers to efforts to incorporate unremunerated work in na-

tional accounting systems [pt. 65(b)].

CHAPTER IV. Social Integration

The focus of this chapter is social integration. The main aim of social integration must be to enable different groups in society to live together in productive and cooperative diversity. Bracketed language deals with: early integration of migrants into society; strengthening the role and the participation of civil society in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies; and the “excessive” production and “illicit trade of arms/sale of arms that are particularly injurious or have indiscriminate effects” [pt. 71,72)].

A. Protection of Human Rights, Cultural Diversity, Responsive Government and Full Participation in Society:

In addition to the title, there are brackets around references to: “encouraging, recommending/considering” ratification of human rights treaties; removing reservations and full implementation of international human rights “treaties/ instruments” (pt. 73(i)); and giving special attention to institutions of civil society representing the disadvantaged (pt. 74(b)).

B. Non-Discrimination, Tolerance and Mutual Respect for and Value of Diversity:

There are no brackets.

C. Equality and Social Justice:

A Sub-paragraph on minimizing the negative impact of structural adjustment policies on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups is the only unresolved issue (pt. 76(f)).

D. Responses to Special Social Needs:

No brackets remain in this section.

E. Responses to Specific Social Needs of Refugees , Displaced Persons and Asylum Seekers, Documented Migrants and Undocumented Migrants:

The only unresolved item is whether or not “other relevant actors” should, in cooperation with governments, create conditions that allow for the voluntary repatriation of refugees and the voluntary and safe return of internally displaced persons (pt 78(d)).

F. Violence, Crime, The Problem of Illicit Drugs and Substance Abuse:

The only bracketed text in this section is whether or not the problems created by vio-

lence, crime, substance abuse and production, use and trafficking of illicit drugs and the rehabilitation of addicts “requires” specific actions (pt. 81)).

G. Strengthening of Family Ties:

These sub-paragraphs refer to the importance that social and economic policies meet the needs of families and the need for family services to enhance understanding and mutual respect in families (pt. 82)).

CHAPTER V. Implementation and Follow-up

This chapter highlights several essential requirements for implementation: protection of human rights; new partnerships; recognition of the world's diversity; empowerment; mobilization of new and additional resources; and recognition of the moral imperative of mutual respect among individuals, communities and nations. Brackets remain around references to “new and additional” resources and around “available” funding sources.

A. National Strategies, Evaluations and Reviews:

The only brackets remain around the reference to “poverty eradication” [pt. 73(c)].

B. Involvement of Civil Society:

There are no brackets in this section.

C. Mobilization of Financial Resources:

In the paragraph on debt, brackets remain around references to debt elimination and/or reduction. The paragraph on international cooperation and financing needs of countries with economies in transition is also bracketed (pt. 78(a)).

D. The Role of the United Nations System:

The entire paragraph on UN technical assistance to countries with economies in transition remains bracketed. Brackets also remain around references to ILO consideration of the social dimensions of the liberalization of international trade and to strengthening UN capacity for gathering information and developing social development indicators.

The above are some of the issues that will be taken up by the Heads of Government and States during the Summit.

A BRIEF COMPILED REPORT OF REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS HELD IN INDIA

During the past few months a number of consultations were held in India on themes of the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development by various NGOs/VOs resulting in a number of declarations, reports and resolutions. These were regional and sectoral consultations barring the one held in New Delhi on 2-3 January. This meeting thoroughly studied the Draft Declaration and Draft Programme of Action.

A South Indian NGO consultation (SINGOC) on the WSSD was held in Bangalore on 8-9 November, 1994. It was attended by the members of NGOs from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The consultation came out with a declaration and recommendations to the Precom III and WSSD.

On 19-20 October 1994 a state level consultation on WSSD was organised by the Institute for Social Education and Development at Madras, Tamilnadu. About 90 persons representing 55 NGOs participated in this from all over Tamil Nadu. Apart from other relevant issues, it also discussed the role of NGOs in India.

On 16th December 1994 a regional consultation took place at Jaipur, jointly organised by a permanent NGO working group on Social Development and CCFCF - Centre for Human Development. Dr. Vijay Shankar Vyas, Director, Institute of Development Studies, inaugurated the consultation. The organising committee members were - Sh. Sharad Joshi from DCNC-CECOEDECON, Ms. Gurinder Kaur, Oxfam America and Sh. Joseph Gathia, CCFCF - Centre for Human Development. The consultation adopted seven resolutions and suggested follow up action.

In continuation of this consultation the representatives of Andhra NGOs met on 21-22 December 1994 to discuss the WSSD Draft Declaration and Programme of Action, India Country Paper, SINGOC WSSD Declaration and the Andhra Pradesh situation in detail. Sponsored by VANI, New Delhi and JANAMITRA, Bangalore it produced the Tirupati Declaration.

On 21-22 December 1994 the Kerala consultative conference on the UN Draft was held in Trivandrum. It suggested various action plans regarding employment generation, social integration etc. underlining their cases in the context of the forth-

coming WSSD.

On 29 December, 1994 a one-day state-level consultation was held in Bhopal jointly by VANI and the Centre of Concern for Child Labour, raising various developmental issues related to WSSD, it at the same time focussed on the situation in India in general and in Madhya Pradesh in particular.

On 3-5 January the Tamilnadu consultation took place at Madras which discussed the Indian situation in detail in the context of WSSD, focussing on issues like the New Economic Policy, GATT, WTO and social integration. It also discussed the role of voluntary organisations.

On 27-28 January 1995 a state-level workshop was organised on WSSD by VANI and VAN-Bihar jointly. It came out with a declaration underlining equity, equality and social justice and making a number of recommendations.

On 29-30 January 1995 a state-level workshop on WSSD was organised in Lucknow by VANI and UPAVAN. Attended mainly by the representatives of NGOs working in UP, the workshop made a number of recommendations in a regional, national and global context.

The United Nations in India organised a one-day western region consultation of the WSSD. It was participated in by nearly 40 delegates from various sectors like the media, private industry, TVs, NGOs and academics.

The idea of holding regional and sectorial consultations emerged in a spontaneous way. Particularly, after some of the NGO leaders from India attended the Precom meetings, it was felt that although at international level some NGOs had taken a lead in highlighting the effects of the agenda of WSSD, there was little knowledge and information about it at grassroot level in India.

Objectives of the regional and sectorial consultations

1. To appraise grassroot NGOs/VOs about the agenda of the World Social Summit.
2. To evolve a common understanding of developmental issues with special reference to the core issues of the WSSD.
3. To bring together a cross section of NGOs in different sectors for the sharing

and exchange of knowledge on their people-oriented development experience.

4. To create an enabling environment in various regions regarding the main themes of the agenda.
5. To identify the critical issues and challenges.
6. To recommend and suggest alternative and development ways and alternatives to the plan of action on the eve of WSSD.
7. To view the prime focus of the WSSD in our regional, sectoral and national context.
8. To explore the role of voluntary sector in the broader context of WSSD and their role during the Summit in Copenhagen.
9. To critically analyse the India country paper.

With these objectives, these consultations and workshops discussed a number of issues ranging from globalisation and debts to social development, poverty eradication, unemployment, gender issues and structural adjustment Programme etc.

Issues Emerging:

It was felt that due to globalisation and other factors, the implementation monitoring of social development should be the responsibility of the whole world community. It was in this spirit that it desired that all humanity is a single community but the current global scenario does not permit it. A small part of humanity is advanced, prosperous and powerful whereas a greater part of it is underdeveloped, debt-ridden and powerless.

Many participants in the consultations on World Summit were of the view that though the documents of the World Summit emphasise the growth as a device of bridging the widening divide between the rich and the poor, this 'very growth syndrome' is precisely the problem for increasing inequalities, chronic poverty and other social problems.

Objections were also raised on the repeated emphasis in the Draft Declaration on the role of market forces and its attempt to make the WB, IMF and WTO super world systems. It was strongly felt that "in the name of economic growth, develop-

ment, free market and globalisation, a few developing countries are continuing to appropriate huge wealth. The developing countries are caught in the debt trap, hence, the social development of these countries is in a jeopardy.

It was also felt that the UN document is based on the wrong belief that once the economic growth is achieved, the social development will follow automatically. Hence many participants in regional consultations felt that the growth-centred development is becoming a development of a few influential minority and leaving majority in poverty. In this run the lower strata of the nations and society were marginalised. Many felt that due to globalisation and fast changing communication systems and technology, the have-nots are being systematically cut off from the developmental process.

The supremacy of the market should give way to the sovereignty of the people. The interests of the International Financial Institutions, TNCs and the national corporate sector should be replaced by the basic needs of the people.

The issue of the social responsibility of the industrial sector was also raised and it was felt that institutions involved in the sector must undergo a change in attitude to take into account the needs of the workers, including health, education etc. the sector must understand its specific role in the economic as well as the social development of the country.

The issue of decentralization and strengthening existing groups of people who had already organised themselves to work towards social development also emerged. It was felt that focus must be on decentralization of decision making processes and resource control and facilitating a people centered development paradigm through participation by the people themselves in decisions which affected their lives.

The definition of poverty as in the UN drafts declaration and programme of action was discussed. It was felt that these definitions failed to look at poverty as a structural issue. Issues related to poverty have to be dealt with in a holistic strategy based on structural understanding.

The Participants at all the consultations severely criticized that India National Report and stated that it was a disembodied statement, lacking vision. It was more of a statement of history rather than India's position on social development. It was stated to be a re-write of the Eighth Five Year Plan.

The document, it was felt, verbalizes only development jargon and appeared to be pro-institution and pro-government rather than pro-people.

The India National Report has also been criticized for presenting a simplistic analysis of the three key issues without any serious consideration to the structural causes of poverty. The reported achievements are questionable and the proposed solutions unrealistic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The major recommendations stated below have emerged from these regional/state consultations.

Recommendations for the National strategy:

1. The development policy in India has to be critically reviewed since it has led to increase in marginalisation of landless agricultural labourers and poor peasants who constitute 40% of India's population. (Tamil Nadu Consultation)
2. Both NGOs and government must focus on the growing problem of urban poverty. Additional and simultaneous emphasis on the alleviation of poverty in rural areas to ensure that the focus of migration is controlled. (Eastern Region Consultation)
3. Poverty eradication should form the centerpiece of economic reforms programmes. (National Consultation Organised by Council for Social Development)
4. The basic need of the country in the context of social development is education for the masses and this should be the focus of the state and civil society groups. Primary Education should be made universal and compulsory. UN bodies, international financial institutions and nation-states of the world should make a determined effort by diverting resources for this purpose. (South India NGO Consultation, Western Region Consultation)
5. Women should be included at all levels of governance, they should have equal access to resources independently and be recognised as a legal entity by themselves. There must be mechanism set up to ensure gender sensitivity at all levels of society. (Western Region Consultation)

6. The participants stated that a call should be given to halt mega development projects big dams, corporate farming etc. which benefit primarily the landed social groups and drive the small and marginal farmers, the landless and the tribals into extreme forms of poverty, unemployment and migration to slum infested urban centers. Halt the process of diverting productive agricultural lands for defence as well as for industrial and commercial purposes. (South India NGO Consultation, Tamil Nadu Consultation).
7. The question of land reforms should be addressed again and such fundamental resources like land, water and forests should be brought under the ownership use and control of local communities. This will democratize the means of production and prevent the unwarranted entry of external exploitative forces. (South India NGO Consultation)
8. Impose a moratorium on national defence expenditure and stop the Production and Sale of arms by national and international companies and corporations. (South India NGO Consultation)
9. In order to guarantee minimum economic and food security, the government should provide for more welfare oriented schemes, and the Public Distribution Systems should be enhanced. (Western Region Consultation)
10. Accountability of government officials handling poverty alleviation programmes must be fixed. (Lucknow Consultation)
11. Right to Employment must be recognised and all NGOs should campaign to achieve this. Efforts should also be made to develop "political will" to fight against poverty. (National Consultation Organised by Council for Social Development)
12. Poverty alleviation programmes in the rural areas must not be based on agriculture alone, but must be linked with those technologies and rural based industries which generate employment; the focus should be on employment for poverty alleviation. (Eastern Region Consultation)
13. To generate employment at the rural level, work opportunities in the following areas should be made available: (Eastern Region Consultation)
 - data management, planning

- social development infrastructure
- watershed management
- energy utilization.

14. It was also highlighted that Social Development as addressed in the World Summit is a far cry from what Gandhi's concept of Socialism was. Development as defined in these papers was just another term with the addition of Social Integration. It was a way of bringing more societal responsibilities under the sway of state institution. Indian Voluntary Sector cannot go along with this formulation. It has its own distinct social location and mission derived from its cultural, civilizational grounding and historical experience. The opportunity at the Social Summit if it is to be used at all, should be taken to present this articulation of our own self-concept and commitment based on the power of the Samaj (Society) Samudhaya (Community) and our lack of alignment from it. Efforts are to be made to have global corporate control to be extended and legitimated through us, by using us as fronts. We have to undo the conditioning of Macaulay, Marx and McNamara and delve deep into our being in close relationship with communities of the people, especially, the poor, the lowly and the lost. (National Consultation Organised by Council for Social Development)

Recommendation for International Strategy:

1. Cancel debts of all developing countries within a stipulated early date. Make the debtor countries use the money for social development of the poor through public monitoring mechanism, Bring the international financial institutions under UN control in order to democratize them to make them accountable to the global community and to remove their profit orientation. (Tirupathi Declaration, South India NGO Consultation).
2. Review efforts to formulate a Code of Conduct for the transfer of technology and a code of conduct that would regulate the activities of transnational corporations. The relevance and quality of science and technology interventions for the weaker sections have to be improved through interfacing science and technology resource centres in every block of 100,000 people. (South India NGO Consultation).

3. While accepting and supporting technological innovations the issue of displacement must be adequately considered, and a broadened social security net should be provided to the affected people. (Patna Consultation)
4. The summit must evolve mechanism to ensure good governance by nation states which means that governments not only govern well but in fact create the best political environment and optimum space for peoples initiatives and participation at all levels and areas of decision making. This would involve decentralization of both political and financial power governing allocation and spending of resources. (Western Region Consultation)
5. The summit must mandate nation-states not to impose patent laws and not to claim intellectual property rights on plants, animals, life saving drugs or on cultural components. (Patna Consultation, Bhopal Consultation)
6. The summit should call for every society to establish independent transparent and accountable peoples commissions for social development to monitor the progress of social development in each country. These commissions should be built from below linking with peoples associations in villages and towns and should not be state established. This commission should be established as a constitutional entity. (Tamil Nadu Consultation)
7. Commit countries to eliminate all forms of discrimination, with particular references to gender, race, ethnicity, and untouchability-the last of these especially applicable to the Indian situation. (National Consultation Organised by Council for Social Development)
8. Funds should be raised through taxing international capital movements to provide the UN with adequate resources to carry out its activities for social integration. These taxes must be collected by the respective government. (Lucknow Consultation)

The participants hoped that the Indian official delegation and the Voluntary Organisations representatives should ensure that some of these recommendations, if not all, would be included in the Draft Documents before they are finalized.

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

HELD AT VISHWA YUVAK KENDRA, NEW DELHI

FEBRUARY 6-7, 1995

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VANI-Voluntary Action Network India

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) is the outcome of the shared need of concerned individuals and voluntary organisation to have a platform for safeguarding and highlighting voluntarism and voluntary action in our country.

VANI is an effort to give collective voice to the experience, achievements, hardships, hurdles and togetherness of individuals in voluntary action in India today.

VANI was formed in April 1988, by some concerned and like-minded workers of the voluntary sector in the country. The need for setting up VANI was seen as:

1. To strengthen voluntarism, and to work toward creating an authentic, positive and supportive climate for voluntary action, as well as to protect and promote the political and cultural space for voluntary action in the country.
2. To be a common platform for those concerned about various issues of development affecting the poor in the country.
3. To facilitate the formation of platforms and federation for the promotion of voluntary action in relation to issues affecting the poor.
4. To be a forum for sharing perspectives and analysis of local, national and international forces, laws, policies, programmes and structures, and their implications for people and voluntary action in India and for taking appropriate action.
5. To promote the following values in voluntary action in society:
 - Decentralisation
 - Democracy
 - Freedom from discrimination
 - Freedom of information, independence of thought
 - Gender equality
 - Secularism
 - Simple, sustainable lifestyle.
6. To identify, address and challenge contradictory tendencies and counter-forces within the voluntary sector.
7. To provide fraternal support and strength to voluntary workers and organisation, particularly at times of hardship.
8. To undertake advocacy on issues of concern to voluntary action with the government, national and international agencies, elected representatives, political parties, trade unions, business and industry, and other structures of power.
9. To facilitate and if necessary coordinate campaigns on emerging issues which affect people and voluntary action in the country.

VANI aims to be not only a voice of those who want to create an atmosphere for value-oriented voluntary action, but also a common platform for highlighting the causes, concerns and issues which affect the freedom and space for voluntary action in the country.

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